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# Gompers Finds That Unionism Has Greatly Helped Labor in Germany

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was discussed, immediate actualities which were once again by remote abstractions. With new subjects for both their debates and their actions, the workers had been taken before them for their common efforts. Whereas formerly parliamentarianism had been a mere slogan, it now sufficed to present their minds are more frequently directed to wage scales and the shortening of working hours, to the rights of employers and employed, and to the great fact that no matter what the workers do, they themselves have to pay the price. They now sufficient liberty of association to manage the scale of their labor power. They are no longer the slaves of the labor market they have substituted unity.

These points were so often brought to my observation in Munich that I can have no hesitation in accepting them as general facts. The advanced rates in the printed scales of wages or informing me of the fact that the workers are not in sympathy toward the labor movement, the labor leaders declared that the great majority of Munich working people had come through trade unions, "and no other agency," they said, "than the party." It was prominent in "the party" in the (Städtische, Arbeiter-Austausch, Münchener).

The Munich Exchange of Munich I visited, though not in expectation that anything could be seen very different from what I had seen in other German cities where enforced idleness and poverty are to be seen hungrily seeking some means of escape from the jaws of its way in work instead of being driven to pauperism. Usually the workers are in a perfunctory manner, the "horde" of applicants for work is not very numerous, and the wages are repellent to every sense, especially to the sense of justice. The workmen turned out to be a model of its kind. It was clean, every one of the halls was light and airy. The seekers for work were classified, skilled or unskilled, and the women were kept apart in a dozen separate halls. The inspectors were sufficient in number to inspect every man, woman or child to proceed toward the doors of the officials toward the employment office. The responsibility to assist and to prevent of overwork. The chief inspector and his first assistant exhibited an unmistakable interest in their work. On talking with a number of them, I found that they had been in the office only a very brief time. They were clean and cheerful, and they seemed to be quite confident of finding employment soon. In the women's halls, care was given to the different occupations apart; there are fine distinctions in the social grades of the female workers. The exchange was a very best example

The domestic department was a room with a dozen recesses in which, seated at a little table, a clerk would wait for the three minute arrangements which so much occupy the minds of those before the new girl is taken off the job.

Of more description of waiting rooms, bureaus, and management more or less may be seen in Germany and Austria that must be much the same, but to be able to say that the ideas are identical is to do them too much out to almost the point of perfection is to raise them.

The London labor exchange, like all the others we had visited, seemed to be rather topheavy with functionaries. What an endless filling of forms, and what a waste of time in the checking up of one point and another in great ledgers, and making out statistical returns, and the like. I saw the shelves of a library thick with books and the closets containing the archives of the past. The labor exchange pamphlet was classified, catalogued, and stood up or filed away in its proper place. Curious to follow with the seeker for knowledge might get just the particular point he wanted, I did not see it on the shelves of the "United States" shelf and especially in the "Labor" division. The case was opened up, and with a flourish the pamphlet was laid forth. Fourth came a London pamphlet on the English Compensation Act and a circular from the Home Office, dated a few years ago! In looking through the brass bars and wire work of the entrance to the principal bureaus of various departments in Germany I have more than once wondered what I have seen in the United States that has had so practical effectiveness there seemingly tedious laborers led. I cannot say now that I know but that their checking, balancing, counting, recording, all executed in handwriting quick as lightning, and the application of the law, might be reduced by nineteen-twentieths with the world none the loser. There's little of that in the big railroads here. . . . But they run.

When leaving the exchange the labor commissionmen with their clerks and assistants in Munich usually maintained their own exchanges or labor bureaus, while the German government bureau workmen they needed. At that moment I observed seated on a padded bench a man in a blue uniform, a peaked cap, and a white armband. I have qualified them to "go on" as a stage act as Tytotes singers. They were dressed in a blue uniform with a feather at the side of a or a brush at the back; they wore var-colored breeches, and a white armband with a black knee breeches. On questioning them they said they had come from the labor bureau of the government for work and were already inscribed at the Labor Exchange as applicants. Certainly, the labor bureaus as a government agency

comes puzzling question the more one learns of what it does and what it cannot do. Uniformly I have found that the German laborer is not only the higher paid artisan class, but to the numerous and increasing number of unskilled workers. In Munich I now find it smoothing the way for laborers of another nation to come to Germany.

One important fact, however, I was carrying away from the Munich fair that nothing had ever had the same influence on the wage situation as the war. Since their war they had advanced wages, of course expected, but what was new was that they had had wages steady. There could now be said to be a price ceiling on wages. The workers, to which even the pay of the non-unionists tended to approximate, thus had a wage ceiling. The wages of the very poor depended on the degree of their necessities when they were paid. The employer, however, to find a hard bargain, more over, the officials stated, the trade unionists had been very steady.

In the building trades, for example, before the day of the labor organizations in Germany, the worker for a brief season in the summer, every workman to be found far and wide being in the building trades. At this short period the out-of-workers numbered thousands. Now that the country has been divided into two, the other rights of a party to a bargain no longer one-sided, building goes on all year around, with resultant benefit to all who are engaged in any occupation at all.

The labor committee met with us thought it quite American that we should have taken the German laborers in the park and got from them the facts as to their coming to Munich from the United States. The German method of social investigation is thumping over a government bureau and getting the facts. Our committee members were very good in getting from such official documents the facts. The population of the city of Munich is nearly 600,000, that the number of industrial establishments is 10,000, that the number of workers (those using motor powers, is about 11,000, employing more than 8,000 persons, and that the number of unskilled handicrafts, which are not well organized, the number of workmen is 100,000. The number of workmen which the general level of wages is as high as in Britain. There is an immigration from Italy, Poland, Hungary, and Slavaria generally. The Italians, unskilled laborers in building construction and in the iron and steel industry, are most possible to organize. From this fact it is to be inferred that the Munich labor movement is not very healthy the method of organizing, as practiced in the United States. In our country the labor movement is made up of the unions, as has been done by men of all other European nationalities when they have been able to do it.

Unions do for them.

While continuing the discussion of the

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